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IN ONE ACT

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## HOUSEHOLD FAIRY.

SCENE.—*An Apartment, the furniture of which is reduced to one handsome, high-backed chair—an escritoire, L. C. and a small table—door in flat, L. C.—window, L.—doors R. and L.—cupboard in flat, R. C.—fireplace, R.*

JULIAN DE CLIFFORD discovered sitting at the escritoire, writing and smoking a cigar—a case of pistols at his side.

JULIAN. (*reading as he writes*) “To you, Charlotte, my first, my only love, do I entrust the fulfilment of my last wishes. When this reaches you, I shall have relieved myself of a life I would gladly have consecrated to you, could I have been base enough to purchase my happiness at the price of yours. For weeks have I hung on to this wretched existence, in expectation of being my dying aunt’s heir. That aunt is dead and I remain a beggar! a De Clifford a beggar! the words are incompatible! it must not be! I die at one p.m. precisely.” (*rises and comes forward*) There, it is over, and what other course remained to me? I have done all that a man—that is to say, a gentleman—could do, and what man—that is to say, what gentleman—could do more? My resources are nearly dried up, my clothes are almost worn out—my credit was worn out long ago, my furniture has disappeared chair by chair. I breakfasted on the proceeds of my last pair of dress boots yesterday. I have swallowed the fire irons and fender (in a transmuted state, of course) and dined off my dinner table in a fashion not originally intended; but tables, even round tables, have an end to them, and soon my sole remaining chair must die a death of lingering consumption! Why should I wrestle with Fate? The De Cliffords never attempted to wrestle with Fate; and I

## A HOUSEHOLD FAIRY.

*First Performed at the St. James's Theatre,  
Under the Management of M. Chatterton,  
On December 24, 1859.*

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### CHARACTERS.

JULIAN DE CLIFFORD . . . . . Mr. H. T. CRAVEN.

KATHARINE . . . . . Miss WYNDEHAM.

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the last of their line, have no taste for such athletic exercise. It is true I might seek assistance from friends, or obtain a meagre subsistence from my sketches, but the De Cliffords cannot beg—a De Clifford cannot labour for a livelihood—from which some might argue that the De Cliffords were a particularly useless family—They may be right—I do not argue the point, but simply repeat I die at one, p.m.—that is to say, in about ten minutes. This cigar will just last my time, and we shall probably go out together.

A VOICE. (*without*) Julian, my boy! Julian!

JULIAN. Ah! that's Flighty's voice! a merry artist friend of mine over the way, who, not having a sixpence to bless himself with, gets blessed, I presume, from other sources, while I who have spent thousands, retain nothing but the recollection of my folly. (*a fork is thrown in at window L., with a piece of paper attached—JULIAN picks it up*) A note by our usual mode of intercommunication. (*reads*) "Mr. Augustus Flighty requests the pleasure of Mr. Julian de Clifford's company to a breakfast he is now giving as a farewell to his bachelor life." Married! Gus Flighty married! Well, I'm glad of it—he's a good little fellow. Let's see, I should like to make him some little wedding present in remembrance of me when I'm gone—that is, four minutes hence. My sketches! no—he'd think it an insult, because the dealer down stairs offered me a larger price for them than he would for his. As if a De Clifford could stoop to *that*. I must find something—and I've no time to lose. (*the clock strikes the four quarters—JULIAN speaks through them*) Ah! there's the hour! (*takes out a portrait, which he holds in his left hand, applying a pistol to his head with his right*) Dearest Charlotte, my last thought was of you! (*knocking at the door, L.*) What's that? a knock? down stairs, I suppose. These noises are exceedingly tiresome. Luckily I'm leaving for a *very quiet neighbourhood*. (*knock and voice of KATHARINE outside*)

KATHARINE. (*calling, L.*) Mr. Julian!

JULIAN. Some one calling me!

KATHARINE. (*without*) Now, don't pretend to be out, because I know you're not.

JULIAN. No, but I'm just going. (*aside*) It's a woman's voice!

KATHARINE. Let me in—I shan't detain you long.

JULIAN. (*aside*) It's a young voice. Oh, one mustn't forget the amenities of life, even in one's last moments; besides, I can put it off for a little. I can go by the 1.20.

*Opens the door, L., and KATHARINE enters, plainly dressed, with a basket and a bundle.*

A country girl!

KATH. Mr. Julian! oh, it is you yourself!

JULIAN. Your discrimination does you credit. It is I; and, it being I, what do you want with me, my dear?

KATH. Why, how you've grown in the last few years!

JULIAN. It is a foible incidental to youth; but, again may I ask what—

KATH. I knew you though, at a glance, for all that.

JULIAN. Oh, you know me? (*aside*) Who can she be?

KATH. Perhaps you'll tell me you're not nephew to your Aunt Jones of Oatlands?

JULIAN. Oh, you come from Oatlands! (*aside*) One of the farm people, I dare say.

KATH. (R.) Yes, forty miles this morning! Oh, these railways make quick work; but I've had trouble enough to find you, and tired enough I am. (*draws the chair down, C., and sits, depositing her basket on the ground.*)

JULIAN. (L.) Ah, doubtless you were present at the death-bed of my poor aunt!

KATH. Poor dear aunt! yes, she called me her little nurse, and would take food from no other hand than mine.

JULIAN. I presume, then, it is on her account you have come to see me?

KATH. Dear me, no—I came upon my own.

JULIAN. Your own?

KATH. Of course! but good gracious, how is this? you don't seem to know me!

JULIAN. Well, my dear, my not immediately recognising you can only be accounted for by the fact that I never saw you before.

KATH. That's good, come! (*rises*) Now, sir, look me full in the face. Do you mean to say you don't recollect little Kitty?

JULIAN. Oh, you're little Kitty! ah, that's very satisfactory. (*aside*) Now who is little Kitty?

KATH. Still in the dark! well, sit down, and I'll brighten up your memory.

JULIAN. (*looking round the room, which contains but the chair on which she is seated*) Thank you, I'd sooner stand.

KATH. Nonsense! sit down, I insist.

JULIAN. Why, the fact is, I'm moving my lodgings, and so much of my furniture has already gone, that—

KATH. Oh, I see! but there's a coal-scuttle—that'll do.

JULIA. A coal-scuttle!

KATH. Of course—why not? however, I'm not so particular.  
*(rising.)*

JULIAN. By no means. Since it will oblige you—but—  
Good gracious! shades of my ancestors, look down and witness  
the last of the De Cliffords seated on a coal-scuttle! *(brings down  
the coal-scuttle, on which he seats himself at her side, L.)*

KATH. There—that's cozy, isn't it?

JULIAN. To be sure—exceedingly—rather unsteady, and not  
particularly dignified, but as you say, cozy.

KATH. Now, can't you recollect a nice little girl not higher  
than this, when a correspondingly nice little boy of fourteen  
found her starving under a hedge? she had been stolen, de-  
spoiled, and deserted by gipsies, when she must have died had  
not the nice little boy carried her in his arms home to his aunt,  
saying, "Aunt, you mustn't call me a little boy any more, for  
I am now a man, and this is to be my little daughter."

JULIAN. Ah, I remember now.

KATH. Then you have no need to be told that the nice little  
boy was called Julian de Clifford, and the nice little girl—

JULIAN. Katharine! my dear little Kitty! why, you've  
grown to be quite a woman!

KATH. Little girls must expect that, you know.

JULIAN. And such a *pretty* woman!

KATH. Great girls always expect *that*.

JULIAN. My familiarity does not offend you!

KATH. Why should it? who may be familiar if you may  
not? are you not my father?

JULIAN. Eh?

KATH. My adopted father?

JULIAN. Certainly—I quite forgot that. I may perhaps,  
then, in that sacred character, venture so far as to—d——n the  
coal-scuttle.

KATH. *(presenting her cheek)* Of course—it is your right.  
It might have come rather earlier from a father who hasn't seen  
his child for eight years. Are these your rooms? *(rising)*

JULIAN. Yes, dear, for want of better.

KATH. I'm sure you don't want any better.

JULIAN. *(gloomily)* I shall not—long.

KATH. I'm sure they're very nice, but dreadfully untidy.  
However, we'll soon put things in order.

JULIAN. It is quite unnecessary.

KATH. I beg your pardon—I'm not used to live in a mess.

JULIAN. Eh?

KATH. And, to begin, I must have all these trunks and  
lumber out of this closet.

JULIAN. Why ?

KATH. Because it's to be my bed-room, of course. Dear me, it's in a terrible confusion.

JULIAN. (*aside*) Not more than I am.

KATH. It must be thoroughly cleaned out.

JULIAN. (*aside*) Not more than I am !

KATH. Yes, but I'll soon put matters straight.

JULIAN. (*aside*) I wish she would—they are very complicated at present. (*aloud*) Am I to understand you mean to stay here.

KATH. Where else but with my father ?

JULIAN. Eh ?

KATH. My adopted father !

JULIAN. True—I had forgotten again ; but surely my aunt, with whom you were so great a favourite, cannot have forgotten you in her will, as she evidently has me. I can forgive her that, as a just reward of my ingratitude, follies and extravagance ; but to cast you upon the world, my poor child, without fortune, friends, or home—

KATH. Do you reckon yourself as nothing, then, or think that where a father, is a daughter cannot find or make a home ? Besides, I shall be no expense—I can live on very little.

JULIAN. (*aside*) How shall I break to her that I have not even the little she requires ? that, but for her, I should have already started on my cold long journey ?

KATH. (*half overhearing*) A journey ! did you say a journey ?

JULIAN. Did I say a journey ? Well—yes—I was about to set off when you came in.

KATH. Well, now I'm here, you'll take me with you, won't you ?

JULIAN. Heaven forbid !

KATH. Is it so very far, then ?

JULIAN. Very far.

KATH. And may I be so bold as to ask where ?

JULIAN. You may—but I cannot be so bold as answer—that is, it is a secret.

KATH. And while you are absent, what's to become of me ?

JULIAN. Of you ? True—*what*, indeed ! (*aside*) How selfish is misery ! I must not leave her friendless and alone ! (*aloud*) Well, for your sake I'll put it off for a day or two.

KATH. Oh, how kind ! what a good, dutiful papa I shall have !

JULIAN. Eh ?

KATH. Adopted papa.

JULIAN. True—I was forgetting again.

KATH. Meantime, let's get this place into order. Bless me,

what a state the carpet is in—and that litter of papers under the writing table—it looks as if it hadn't been swept for a month—but you have a broom, I suppose?

JULIAN. A broom? I daresay—I don't know.

KATH. (*takes out a handbroom and dustpan from cupboard, l. f.*) Of course—here, now set to work while I put things in their place a little. (*thrusts them into his hands*)

JULIAN. What am I to do with these?

KATH. Only kneel down and carefully brush that litter into the dustpan.

JULIAN. (*gravely*) I would do much to oblige you, very much—but the De Cliffords never swept rooms, or knew anything about dustpans!

KATH. Probably not—but if our ancestors were as wise as we, where would be the advance of the age, you know?

JULIAN. I submit. (*kneels down*) Only, if the shade of the first De Clifford should be looking down upon me now—

KATH. Well?

JULIAN. The venerable warrior would be rather disgusted, that's all.

KATH. There—that's better! (*she has put the room in order, and is surveying him*) Very good—very promising for a beginner! Empty them into the dust bin.

JULIAN. Eh?

KATH. The dust bin—there!

JULIAN. Oh, I beg pardon! (*puts brush, &c., into cupboard*)

KATH. And now, let me tell you, I begin to feel rather hungry!

JULIAN. (*aside*) I knew it! I knew she would! It is an odd thing, a person can't pass a few days in agreeable society without feeling hungry!

KATH. I only took a slice of bread, and a cup of coffee when I left Oatlands this morning—so I may almost say I have not breakfasted.

JULIAN. And, by a singular coincidence, so may I.

KATH. That's capital—suppose we breakfast together, then.

JULIAN. Exactly—*suppose* we breakfast together. (*aside*) Supposition isn't expensive, and it's about all I can afford! Luckily there is one chair left—but they take such a long time to cook—and how am I to get it away?

KATH. (*has been taking the contents of her basket, and laying the table*) I've not come empty-handed, you see. There's a loaf of my own baking, a pat of butter of my own churning, and a nice piece of home-cured bacon. What do you think of my present?

JULIAN. I am thinking of her future.

KATH. Come, bustle about!

JULIAN. I—bustle about?

KATH. To be sure—a fair division of labour—you lay the fire, and I'll lay the breakfast things—here's the wood—now, be brisk! (*gives him a bundle of wood from cupboard*)

JULIAN. No—excuse me—I really don't remember a case—

KATH. A case?

JULIAN. Of a De Clifford lighting his own fire—unless, indeed, it was a war beacon.

KATH. Well, fancy it a war beacon, or a town you are reducing to ashes—only make it so as it will boil the kettle! Stay—no, that's not right—you must not put the bundle in all of a lump! Besides, you want some paper—may I take this? (*seeing pistols on table*) Ugh! what are these? a pair of pistols!

JULIAN. Take care, they're loaded! (*she gives him paper, and he lights the fire*)

KATH. Your intended travelling companions, I suppose?

JULIAN. (*embarrassed*) Yes, they were for my journey.

KATH. And couldn't you travel without them?

JULIAN. Not the road I was taking.

KATH. You may think me a little coward, but I can't bear the sight of fire arms—so, now your going is postponed, you must promise me to lay them aside.

JULIAN. There, you see, I do. (*putting them into case*)

KATH. And you will take care they shall do you no injury? An accident so soon happens.

JULIAN. Well, I promise.

KATH. Now attend to the fire, while I put my room tidy, and get your breakfast things. *Exit, L. C. D.*

JULIAN. (*solas*) If any one this morning had foretold that I, De Clifford, in two hours' time should be boiling a kettle, having previously swept a room, I should have kicked the prophet, without the slightest hesitation; yet the bare request of a little country girl, has transformed me into a maid-of-all-work! It is singular that the only good action I ever did should rise up to embarrass my last moments—that kettle's singing! But for her arrival I should have slipped off, in debt with no one, under obligation to no one, and died as becomes a De Clifford—it's beginning to boil! But for her, I should have escaped this humiliation—and the worst of it is, she has so far weakened my self-respect, that I'm afraid I almost begin to think it good fun!

VOICE. (*outside*) Now then, Julian, breakfast!

OTHER VOICES. Come on, there's a good fellow!

JULIAN. Gracious ! there's Flighty's breakfast party—I forgot that ! (*goes to window, and opens it—VOICES more distinct*)

VOICE. Come over—we're waiting.

JULIAN. Gentlemen, I know you'll excuse me, but I'm detained in doors just now by a particular engagement.

VOICES. Ha, ha ! we understand !

VOICE. Bring the particular engagement with you—we shall be delighted, I'm sure !

JULIAN. You're quite mistaken. The fact is, I don't feel very well just now, and—

VOICE. Poor fellow ! poor invalid ! ha, ha !

JULIAN. I'll endeavour to look in in the course of the morning !

VOICE. That's right—make an effort—interesting convalescent !

VOICES. Ha, ha ! (*JULIAN closes the window, and the VOICES are drowned*)

*Re-enter KATHARINE, with cups and saucers, &c.*

KATH. Oh, you're improving rapidly ! (*they lay breakfast things, &c.*) Now to breakfast—sit down ! (*sits, L. c.*) Oh, I forgot—you have no chair !

JULIAN. (*gaily*) No chair ? what do you call this ? (*fetches a trunk from lumber room, and sits on it at table, R. c., cutting bread and butter*)

KATH. Yes, you certainly are improving ! What do you think of my breakfast ?

JULIAN. (*eating heartily*) Delicious ! I never enjoyed bread and butter so much before ! Why, you're quite a little fairy ! I'll take another cup ! What a flavour this tea has ! where did you procure it ?

KATH. From your canister, of course.

JULIAN. Impossible ! why, mine was beastly stuff !

KATH. Perhaps because the water didn't boil—or, perhaps, which is more likely, you had not earned the right to appreciate the flavour you commend. Oh, we shall have to work, I can tell you, if we wish to live !

JULIAN. But if we don't wish to live, Kate ?

KATH. We are not fit to die, Julian. Now let us reckon up our resources.

JULIAN That process will not be a tedious one !

KATH. To begin—are you in debt ?

JULIAN. To be in debt is to *have been a beggar—I am a gentleman.*

KATH. Good—then with a little patience and perseverance, we shall get on capitally.

JULIAN. (*pacing the stage*) A pleasant prospect truly. And you would have me tuck up my sleeves, and work like a ploughboy?

KATH. No, you may work like a gentleman if you like! Oh, many have and do, of as great a family as yours.

JULIAN. Poor devils! Yes, and I do not envy them the meanness which permits them to sacrifice their pride for so poor a boon as a life of poverty.

KATH. They have exchanged it for a nobler and loftier pride than any the longest line of ancestry can warrant, for the pride of duty well performed, the only pride that adversity cannot humble, or time decay.

JULIAN. It may be as you say—but to me it seems easier to die than to submit.

KATH. And so vindicate yourself as a gentleman, by proving yourself a coward?

JULIAN. A coward! (*crosses to L.*)

KATH. Surely—he who basely deserts the post assigned to him, and runs away from life's great battle field for fear of a few blows, is a coward—and worse—he is a traitor! (*crosses to L.*)

JULIAN. Dear me, I never viewed it that way—but if I wished to work, how am I to set about it? To be sure, there is a cobbler's stall to let in the next street, but in that branch of art my education has been so sadly neglected—

KATH. Well, if you can't mend shoes, I see you can paint pictures. These are yours, are they not? (*looking at portfolio*)

JULIAN. A few sketches I knocked off at different times in Flighty's studio for my own amusement.

KATH. And why not for the amusement of others? This, now, I dare say, is worth five shillings.

JULIAN. Five shillings! Old Thompson, down stairs, offered me a sovereign for it yesterday. (*aside*) Curse his impudence!

KATH. There, you see, we are rich at once. (*turning over the sketches*) Ha, here's Oatlands—and the line of elms, and—yes, there's my bed room window! You've not forgotten the old place, then?

JULIAN. Forgotten Oatlands? There's not a room or passage of it but is instinct with memories! When I began that sketch, I thought the original was to have been, in time, my own—but that is past—let me tear it up.

KATH. Not at all—you'll set to work at once, and finish it. Here, sit down. (*sits him down to table*) Here are your chalks, go to work at once—I'll take no denial. See, I set you a good

example, I've brought my work with me—and as to Oatlands, who knows it may not yet be yours?

JULIAN. I—mine?

(KATE has sat down on the trunk by the fireplace, with her work, which she has taken from basket)

KATH. (embarrassed) I mean that—that it may be for sale.

JULIAN. And you'd have me buy it? silly little thing!

KATH. Why not? Artists have made fortunes—and perseverance will do much.

JULIAN. (working hard) Oh, if it were only perseverance! But—(throws down pencil) this is folly! Besides, if I had it, how could I endure the associations that now cling to it, and invest the old house with the chilly solitude of a tomb?

KATH. Perhaps, if you were alone—but—with a companion who should restore it to sunshine—a companion whom you loved, who—for I suppose you'll marry some day—

JULIAN. (with animation) True—with a companion—Charlotte, perhaps!

KATH. Charlotte?

JULIAN. Yes—or Jane, or Maria, or Louisa—she must have some name, you know, and why not Charlotte?

KATH. (sighing) True—why not Charlotte?

JULIAN. (starting up) Kate, it was an angel in your likeness that knocked this morning at my door—you have restored me to life! You have done more, you have taught me life's value, you have given me hope, and with hope, motive for exertion! I'll just step down and see what these sketches are worth! Don't be alarmed—I'll be back in five minutes.

*Exit, hurriedly, with sketches, L. D.*

KATH. (solus) Charlotte! Mine was a goodly dream! Why did I venture here? To restore his happiness—to lose my own? Well, I must not regret the sacrifice, so the object is achieved. These dreadful pistols! I tremble to think of their purpose! Is the danger even yet over? Let me, at any rate, make sure. This escritoire has a key—I'll lock them in here, and—(seeing the miniature) What's this—a miniature? a lady! Charlotte, doubtless! She is very pretty—prettier than I! (weeping) Well, it was a goodly dream, and bitter is the waking! (a noise of applause, and gingling of glasses heard outside) Dear me, neighbours so near!

VOICE. (without) Here's Julian's health!

VOICES. Hurrah! Julian! "For he's a jolly good fellow!"  
(singing.)

KATH. His name! can he be among them? (opens the window, and is received with a volley of laughter)

Voice. Here's the particular engagement!

Another. Charming! our friend has excellent taste.

Voice. Bravo, Julian, my boy! introduce the lady. (KATHARINE *hastily closes the window, and retreats in alarm*)

KATH. Great heaven! what do they think of me? and—worse! what have they not a right to think of me? This is no longer my fitting home! Let me go, and at once! (*she shuts the escritoire, and is turning the key, when*

JULIAN runs in in high spirits—some money and a letter in his hand—she supports herself, trembling, against the table.

JULIAN. Here they are. I had no idea four sovereigns were worth so much! I'd not exchange these four sovereigns that I have earned for any of the several four hundred I've squandered. Now we can commence housekeeping in earnest. Why, my dear girl, how you tremble! (*throws the letter he was about to read on the table*) Are you not well?

KATH. (*with an effort*) Thank you—yes, quite well. And so you have disposed of the sketches?

JULIAN. Yes, and I am to receive as much more for as many more as I choose to bring! And here have I been abusing life, as ignorant people abuse other good things, because I never rightly understood it till now. Kate, I am an altered man—I have turned over a new leaf, and it will be my fault if the fresh page be ever blotted!

KATH. You are sure the sickly fancies of this morning have all fled?

JULIAN. Like mist before the sun—I swear it.

KATH. Julian, be true to these good thoughts, and you may yet be rich—be happy. Oh, how I pray you may be happy!

JULIAN. And you?

KATH. I? Oh, yes—I shall be happy, too, of course—very happy!

JULIAN. There is a reservation in your tone, Kate—you have some thought lurking behind your words.

CATH. (*hastily*) No—indeed, no!

JULIAN. You are agitated—confess, there is something. Surely you may confide in one who loves you so.

KATH. You?

JULIAN. Certainly. Who has a right to love you, if I have not? It was the lesson you taught me this morning, and what I learned then for your sake, I retain now, with pleasure for my own.

KATH. It was a foolish fancy which I must, some time, confess, but—not now—not here. I will write to you from Oatlands,

JULIAN. You wish to leave me? Have I, then, offended you?

KATH. Oh, no, no!

JULIAN. It was but just now you came to claim my guidance and protection!

KATH. Much has passed since then—while you were away. I have reflected, and—and my position here is misinterpreted—your neighbours and friends opposite misconstrue my presence, and—

JULIAN. If they have dared—

KATH. They are not to blame. It was an ill-considered step which I must, at once, retrace! It is alike needful for your honour and for mine, we part.

JULIAN. (*aside*) She is right! What may not Charlotte think?

KATH. You agree with me?

JULIAN. Alas, I must. It seems hard to part with you, but we must not despair—meantime, I expect to hear from you every day, and perhaps, a time may come when you may return to me without impropriety.

KATH. How?

JULIAN. Yes—if, as you hinted—and it's not unlikely *now*, if I were to marry—

KATH. Ah, true—if you were to marry—

JULIAN. It was your own suggestion, you know. Why, how pale you look! you are not well!

KATH. Nothing—my morning's walk, perhaps—you know I was up early, and—(*faintly*)

JULIAN. True—well, go in and lie down for awhile—we'll talk the matter over when you have rested, and this afternoon, if you are well enough, and wish it, you can set off for Oatlands.

KATH. Yes, this afternoon, as you say. (*he kisses her—aside*) No delay—at once—and *for ever*. Exit R. C. D.

JULIAN. (*solas*) If I were not already an engaged man—engaged, too, to the most constant, disinterested, and devoted of her sex, I should be in marvellous peril of falling desperately in love with that little girl. But then I'm so much older than she is—no, not so much either—and she will persist in looking upon me in such a terribly paternal light that—Psha! besides, I happen to be already engaged to the most constant, disinterested and devoted of her sex. Bless my soul, I quite forgot the letter the postman gave me in Thompson's shop. (*taking up letter*) As I don't owe anything, and can't lend anything, my correspondence is not voluminous. Let's see. Ah, Flighy's hand! the fellow's getting ceremonious on the eve of marriage

—given up the window for the post. (*reads*) “I know you’re the best fellow in the world. I want you to be the ‘best man’ at my wedding. You know the lady, I think. We met her at the Crankum’s, last summer—Charlotte Granger.” (*throws down letter and paces stage angrily*) Charlotte Granger! My Charlotte! the most constant, devoted, and disinterested of her sex! Shall my hopes be thus ruthlessly blighted? shall I tamely submit to see my fairest dreams— (*suddenly adopting a rational tone*) Somehow it won’t do. I don’t know why, but I can’t work myself up into the proper state of fury and despair. Two hours back I should have blown my brains out, having, of course, previously blown out *his*; but now, though I’m quite conscious of being deeply wounded in the tenderest part, by some strange perversion of feeling, I rather like the sensation. (*laughter heard without*) Laugh away, my fine fellows. Perhaps this will quicken your merriment. You’ve taken the original, permit me to present you with a copy!

(*opens window and dashes the miniature into that opposite—a crash of glass.*)

VOICE. Halloo! I say!

JULIAN. A little wedding present, that’s all. He looks at it—he’s savage—that’s capital! He menaces me—he can scarcely speak for rage. What do you say? satisfaction! oh, certainly—any quantity, anywhere you like. (*shuts window and comes down*) I am so happy, I’d fight any one who asked me. Stay, though, am I sure of her affection? she’s here!

*Re-enter KATHARINE, a letter in her hand, with bundle, as in her first entrance.*

KATH. You see I am quite recovered, and ready to set off.

JULIAN. That letter!

KATH. It is the promised explanation. You may read it an hour hence—when I am gone.

JULIAN. You will go then?

KATH. Was it not your own advice?

JULIAN. True; but as you said just now, much has passed since then. I, like you—have reflected, and—and—in short, I promised you a time might come when I could ask you without impropriety to remain.

KATH. When you were married? you are about, then—

JULIAN. On one condition—that you will be my wife.

KATH. I? do I hear aright? (*staggering to chair*) And Charlotte?

JULIAN. A feverish dream of my ill-spent life’s delirium. You are the bright reality that greets my waking. I am no longer poor, since you have taught me I can work. I no longer

wish to die, since you have taught me how to live. Will you desert the patient your art has restored? you do not answer, dearest Kate?

KATH. (*laying her head upon his breast*) You may read that letter now.

JULIAN. (*reading*) "Pardon the indiscretion—the sad error of which I have been guilty. I am, despite my urgent and repeated remonstrances, the inheritress of your aunt's fortune. But, rendered partly sensible of the injustice she was doing you, her last request was that I should seek you out, and, if you still retained your old affection for me, our interests should be united by marriage. I have complied, and bitterly have I paid the penalty. Oatlands shall yet be yours. Forgive the vanity that bade me hope you would ever share it with me." Why, Kate, dearest, then you loved me all this while?

KATH. I have loved you all my life.

JULIAN. That's capital! it only remains, then, to pack up at once for Oatlands, and to-morrow I consecrate to your service the new life you have given me.

KATH. Have you considered whether your great and high-born friends will approve?

JULIAN. Our greatest friends, dearest Kate, are *here*—around us. It is on their approval we depend to ensure the happiness of our little "HOUSEHOLD FAIRY."

JULIAN.

R.

KATHARINE.

L.

CURTAIN.

### STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*; D. F. *Door in the Flat*; or Scene running across the back of the Stage; C. D. F. *Centre Door in the Flat*; D. R. C. *Right Door in the Flat*; L. C. F. *Left Door in the Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; 2 E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*.

\* \* \* *The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.*

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